

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-31, 33-36 and 38 remain pending in the present application, Claims 17-25 and 35 having been amended by way of the present amendment, Claims 32 and 37 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by way of the present amendment. No new matter has been added.¹

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 17 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Asher (U.S. Pat. No. 5,159,159, hereinafter “Asher”) in view of Eventoff (U.S. Pat. No. 4,810,992, hereinafter “Eventoff”); and Claims 18-35, 37, and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Asher in view of Eventoff and further in view of Crumley, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,429,301, hereinafter “Crumley”).

As an initial matter, Applicants and Applicants’ representatives thank Examiner Lee for the courtesy of an interview granted on October 27, 2009. During the interview, differences between the claimed invention and the art of record were discussed. Comments discussed during the interview are substantially summarized below.

Claim 1 recites a data input device, comprising:

first, second, third and fourth terminals;

plural keys, said keys being arranged in at least two rows;

a first ohmic resistor, a first end of said first ohmic resistor forming the third terminal of the data input device and a second, opposite, end of said first ohmic resistor forming the fourth terminal of the data input device; and

a plurality of unidirectional position detectors, each unidirectional position detector being associated with one of said at least two rows of keys, respectively, each of the plurality of unidirectional position detectors including

a first input connection, a second input connection, and an output connection, and

¹ Support for the amendments to Claim 17 is found in original Claim 23 and at least at page 11 of Applicants’ specification.

at least one voltage divider sensor having a second ohmic resistor extending substantially along said one of said at least two rows of keys associated with said unidirectional position detector, a first end of said second ohmic resistor forming the first input connection of said unidirectional position detector, and a second, opposite, end of said second ohmic resistor forming the second input connection of said unidirectional position detector, wherein

the output connections of each of the plurality of unidirectional position detectors are connected to said first ohmic resistor at different locations between said first and second ends of said first ohmic resistor, and

the first input connections of each of the plurality of unidirectional position detectors are connected together to form said first terminal of the data input device and the second input connections are connected together to form said second terminal of the data input device.

Applicants respectfully submit that Asher and Eventoff both fail to disclose or suggest “a plurality of unidirectional position detectors, each unidirectional position detector being associated with one of said at least two rows of keys, respectively, each of the plurality of unidirectional position detectors including, a first input connection, a second input connection, and an output connection, and at least one voltage divider sensor having a second ohmic resistor extending substantially along said one of said at least two rows of keys associated with said unidirectional position detector, a first end of said second ohmic resistor forming the first input connection of said unidirectional position detector, and a second, opposite, end of said second ohmic resistor forming the second input connection of said unidirectional position detector,” as recited in Claim 17.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that Asher and Eventoff both fail to disclose or suggest “the output connections of each of the plurality of unidirectional position detectors are connected to said first ohmic resistor at different locations between said first and second ends of said first ohmic resistor,” **and** “the first input connections of each of the plurality of unidirectional position detectors are connected together to form said first terminal of the data input device and the second input connections are connected together to form said second terminal of the data input device,” as recited in Claim 17.

Therefore, independent Claim 17 (and claims dependent therefrom) is believed to patentably define over Asher and Eventoff.

Independent Claims 20 and 25, while differing in scope from Claim 1, patentably define over Asher and Eventoff for substantially the same reasons as Claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Asher and Eventoff do not anticipate or render obvious the features of independent Claims 20 and 25. Therefore, independent Claims 20 and 25 (and claims dependent therefrom) are believed to patentably define over Asher and Eventoff.

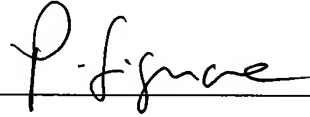
With regard to the rejection of Claims 18-35 and 38 as unpatentable over Asher in view of Eventoff and further in view of Crumley, it is noted that Claims 32 and 37 are canceled, making the rejection of these claims moot. Additionally, Claim 20 has been rewritten into independent form, as noted above. Regarding pending Claims 18, 19, 21-31, 33-35, and 38, these claims are dependent from Claims 17 or 20, and thus are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Crumley does not cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Asher and Eventoff. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 18, 19, 21-31, 33-35, and 38 are patentable over Asher, Eventoff, and Crumley.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, L.L.P.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 07/09)

Philippe J.C. Signore
Registration No. 43,922